



USDA-APHIS

Agricultural Emergency Response Training (AgERT)

Overview

The AgERT course is a product of an ongoing collaborative partnership between USDA and DHS to enhance national preparedness for acts of agricultural terrorism. Developed by USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) and the DHS Office for Domestic Preparedness' Center for Domestic Preparedness, the AgERT course delivers the best available hands-on emergency preparedness and response training for agricultural responders. CDP is the operational arm of the Office for Domestic Preparedness, part of the Office of State and Local Government Coordination and Preparedness.

The recently released Homeland Security Presidential Directive No. 9 (HSPD-9) directs the Secretaries of Homeland Security and Agriculture to prepare their Departments and the Nation to respond to natural, accidental, and deliberate agricultural disease events. The USDA-APHIS/CDP relationship is one of several USDA action steps to improve upon USDA's initiatives to secure America's agricultural bounty.

Over the past several months, select USDA-APHIS personnel have worked in concert with the CDP staff to formulate an agricultural-specific emergency response training program. The goal of the program is to allow USDA-APHIS personnel to train in a "hands-on" environment to gain valuable knowledge and experience in recognizing, reacting, and recovering from a WMD incident or an agriculture disease emergency.

This is truly an APHIS-wide training program that is relevant to Veterinary Services, Plant Protection and Quarantine, Wildlife Services, Animal Care, and others. Additionally, there is strong interest in this program by international partners.

For general questions, click on the *FAQs* link on the AgERT main page to see if your questions are addressed. If you have specific questions or comments, click on the *Contact Us* link on the AgERT main page for specific points of contacts.